

Maintaining a healthy diet for people living with dementia



Summary: Why is maintaining a healthy diet so important?

The onset of dementia can adversely affect an individual's ability to eat, but maintaining a healthy diet is vital for improving health and wellbeing.

Issues with communication, tiredness or depression due to dementia can make it difficult for people living with the condition to eat properly. Some types of dementia can make swallowing more difficult and some conditions associated with ageing can be unhelpful, too.

However, not eating a healthy diet can lead to complications in the long term, so it's important to help loved ones with dementia to eat as well as they can.

Ways you can help people living with dementia maintain a healthy diet

A combination of factors can make eating well difficult for people living with dementia, but by encouraging them to eat and by offering food they like and is easy to eat, you can help make sure they get the essential nutrients they need. You can experiment with different ways to make food look or smell more appealing.

People living with dementia can still contribute to family meals, which can help boost wellbeing. Laying the table or helping to chop ingredients can be relaxing and enjoyable.

Recommended foods for people with dementia

Research indicates that a Mediterranean-style diet is healthiest for people living with dementia. Typically, people from regions with this diet outlive those from elsewhere in the world and suffer from far fewer strokes.

Foods including fresh fruits, vegetables, lean meat and olive oil have been found to lower cholesterol and improve health, helping people to live better lives.

Studies have also shown that foods such as fish - which contains high levels of omega-3 - can help boost the memory so could have significant benefits for people living with dementia.



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